Press release

Topsy-turvy weather

11 December 2001

As Britain lies shrouded in fog this week other parts of Europe are seeing their weather patterns turned upside down, the Met Office has revealed.

Freezing temperatures have hit the usually warmer climes of southern Europe, while the inhabitants of Iceland have been basking in a mild spell.

This week Thessaloniki, in northern Greece, has seen temperatures fall to lower than -5 °C, the average for this time of year is usually 4 °C, while in Iceland the temperatures have been soaring to 10 °C, when they are usually -5 °C. Meanwhile parts of southern Turkey have had more than 30 inches of rain this autumn, with more floods occurring last weekend.

Cold weather is also sweeping across the Mediterranean, with the Met Office predicting minimum temperatures of -10 °C in some parts of northern Spain and southern France, later in the week.

Nigel Reed, of the Met Office's forecasting centre, said: "The normal patterns of weather moving west to east have been reversed, leading to cold air from Asia spreading over parts of Europe and possibly affecting the UK later."

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